

Good Afternoon Fellow Representatives,

My name is Darius Burke. I live in Manchester, Connecticut. I am 24 years old. I live with Bipolar Disorder and a non-verbal learning disability. I am here today regarding bill number SB750 "An act concerning the prevention and treatment of mental illness at institutions of higher Education". Back in September 2015, I began writing a bill that outlined This very important situation. People with mental illness should absolutely 100 percent be given the support and care they deserve in educational institutions.

I understand the struggles and pain of those who ask for help and never receive it. I understand the nagging question of "whether I should dropout or not?" I lived through This situation three different times. Obviously I have a completely different Learning style then what college professors teach. Memorization is literally impossible for Me. I'm better as a visual learner. Even though this is what I think about education, It is different for those who want to graduate from college and have the specific Learning style that works in the classroom.

I know what it's like to ask for help and being denied those services. I know what it's like To be discriminated against. I know what it's like to be told "I'm not going to take my attention Away from the class to pay attention to you".

It is time for the state of Connecticut to start taking this matter seriously. It is vital for those With mental illness to receive the care and support they deserve. I would also like to Mention in addition to this bill, that legislators also make it a priority to make bullying Illegal in all areas of education, including making it a priority to push consequences Against educators if they are found to be bullying or discriminating against those with Mental illness. Support is important but also having a system in place that makes it Illegal for educators and students to bully people with mental illness, will finally Create a safe and secure environment for all people.

I support this bill and hopefully it is implemented. Like I had also mentioned, Bullying needs to be made illegal for a bill like this one to actually succeed in full.

In conclusion, I hope to work with legislators on creating similar proposals so that Discrimination and bullying can be eliminated, giving students and educators a Moral obligation to treat everyone with kindness and respect. I encourage that this bill Passes and I support it 100 percent.

Sincerely,

Darius Burke

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